

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Robert W. Burgess, Director

CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

FOR RELEASE

October 28, 1955

Washington 25, D. C.

Series P-20, No. 61

MOBILITY OF THE POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES APRIL 1954 TO APRIL 1955

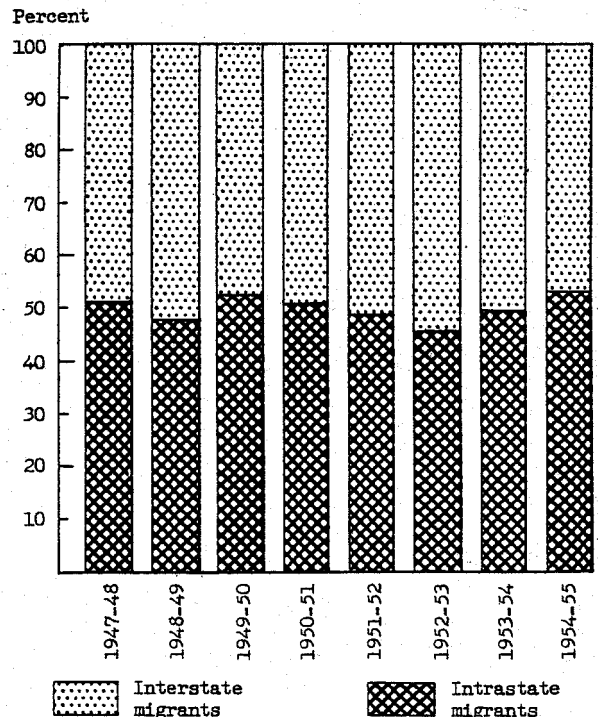
The increases in business activity and in residential construction for the year ending in April 1955 were accompanied by an increase in the mobility of the American people, according to the results of a sample survey announced today by Robert W. Burgess, Director, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. This increase was shared by many different parts of the population. In April 1955, 19.9 percent of persons 1 year old and over living in continental United States were living in a different house from the one they lived in a year earlier; in April 1954, the corresponding figure was 18.6 percent. Of the 158½ million persons 1 year old and over in April 1955, 21 million, or 13.3 percent, were living in a different house in the same county as a year ago and 10½ million, or 6.6 percent, were living in a different county. An additional million persons, or 0.6 percent, had come into the United States from abroad. The increase in the number of movers was largely attributable to the rise in the number of short distance (within-county) movers from 19 million in the previous year.

Annual mobility data began to be collected in the Current Population Survey in April 1948. During this period, the Korean War and changes in business activity have had observable but relatively small effects. The percentage of all movers in the population has ranged from 18½ to 21 and that of migrants from 5½ to 7.

The proportion of migrants crossing State lines has been remarkably stable in the 8-year period ending in April 1955. As shown in the chart, roughly one-half of all migrants are interstate migrants. The proportion has varied

within a rather narrow band of 3 or 4 percentage points above or below 50 percent. In terms of the proportion of interstate migrants to all migrants, the range has been from a high of 54 percent for the year April 1952 to 1953 to a low of 47 percent for the year covered by the current survey and also for April 1949 to 1950.

PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS BY DISTANCE
MOVED: APRIL 1948 TO APRIL 1955



SIZE OF PLACE

Among the three broad residence classes, the population living in rural-nonfarm areas in April 1955 was again the most mobile (22.1 percent) and that in rural-farm areas the least (14.5 percent) (table 2). The results of surveys for the last five years show that there is as much range in the mobility rates among different sizes of urban places as there is among the urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm populations. The largest urbanized areas (3 million or more) tended to have low proportions of movers--ranking close to the rural-farm population in this respect. On the other hand, cities of 25,000 or more outside urbanized areas tended to contain as large a proportion of movers as the rural-nonfarm population.

In the last two years, inhabitants of the New York-Northeastern New Jersey Standard Metropolitan Area were less mobile than those in the smaller standard metropolitan areas. Persons living in standard metropolitan areas were somewhat more mobile than those in non-metropolitan areas, however.

COLOR

In recent years nonwhites have tended to be more mobile than whites, whereas whites have tended to travel longer distances. In the year ending in April 1955, 18.0 percent of the nonwhites were same-county movers as against 12.7 percent of the whites (table 1). The corresponding figures for a year earlier were 16.0 and 11.8 percent. On the other hand, 6.8 percent of the whites were migrants (intercounty movers) in contrast with 4.4 percent of the nonwhites.

SEX AND AGE

A review of the mobility data that have been collected by the Bureau of the Census reveals that mobility rates for males and females are not very different, but there has been a tendency for males to be slightly more mobile. There has also been a tendency for males to move longer distances.

In the eight successive annual surveys on mobility, the "profile" of mobility rates by age has been extremely constant. The same kind of sharp variations with age are characteristic of each distance-type of mobility also. According to the 1950 Census data, the

total mobility rate declines from infancy to a trough at about age 14, increases rapidly to a peak at about age 21, and then declines again throughout the rest of the life span. The low mobility rate at age 14 is not reached again until the late forties.

LABOR FORCE STATUS

Differences in the mobility rates by labor force status for the year ending April 1955 are in agreement with the results of previous surveys (table 4). Persons in the labor force show a higher rate of mobility within the same county but a lower migration rate than those not in the labor force. The unemployed were more mobile than the employed. As in the previous survey, members of the Armed Forces included in the survey¹ were highly mobile; one out of every four was living in a different State and one out of every seven had returned to the United States from abroad.

According to the eight annual surveys going back to 1947-1948, the labor force participation of females 14 years old and over tends to be (1) highest for those moving within the same county, (2) next highest for those staying in the same house, and (3) lowest for migrants. Among males those having moved within a county are also most likely to be in the labor force at the survey date, but otherwise the rankings are not very consistent. These differences appear to be associated with differences in age and marital status.

Among males, the ranking of total mobility rates according to employment status has been very consistent, however. Members of the Armed Forces are by far the most mobile, followed by the unemployed, the civilian employed, and those not in the labor force. Again, this ranking is found most consistently for short-distance mobility rates. It is least consistent for intrastate migration rates.

These relationships between mobility and employment status are clearly partly a matter of different age concentrations. The most recent Current Population Survey data on this subject by age (1949-1950), however, indicate that members of the Armed Forces are much more mobile than the various civilian categories of comparable age. The relatively low mobility

¹ Those who were living off post or with their families on post.

of males 14 years old and over not in the labor force, however, may be largely a matter of their concentration among adolescents and the elderly, whose mobility is low.

CLASS OF WORKER AND INDUSTRY

In the current survey, the same wide variation in the mobility rates by class of worker and major industry group was observed as in the April 1954 survey (table 5). One out of every five private wage and salary workers was a mover in contrast to one out of every ten of the self-employed and unpaid family workers. The patterns of mobility of government workers approximated those of the private wage and salary workers. Considering the last two surveys jointly, wage and salary workers (either private or government) had higher total mobility rates than other workers.

Among wage and salary workers, those in agriculture, forestry, and fishing and in construction tended to have high mobility rates and those in transportation, communication, and other public utilities; in finance, insurance, and real estate; and in professional and

related services tended to have low rates. Agricultural wage workers had notably high intracounty mobility rates, whereas those in entertainment and recreation services had a high proportion of interstate migrants.

REGIONS

The population of the West was most mobile and that of the Northeast the least (table 6). In April 1955 the proportion of movers and migrants in the West was more than twice as large as in the Northeast--29.6 vs. 13.9 percent for all movers and 11.3 vs. 4.3 percent for migrants. The tendency of a larger proportion of nonwhites than whites to move within a county was found in each of the four regions. Three out of every four migrants were living in the same region in April 1955 as a year earlier (table 7).

The estimated numbers of in-migrants and of out-migrants, by regions, for three periods are shown in the following table. Over the last two years, there has been a net migration to the West and from the South, with only small net shifts for the two Northern regions.

IN-MIGRANTS AND OUT-MIGRANTS, BY REGION: APRIL 1954 TO 1955, APRIL 1953 TO 1954, AND APRIL 1949 TO 1950

(1949-1950 data from 1950 Census; others from Current Population Survey)

Region	In-migrants			Out-migrants		
	1954-1955	1953-1954	1949-1950	1954-1955	1953-1954	1949-1950
Northeast.....	360,000	364,000	255,860	439,000	408,000	391,155
North Central.....	724,000	827,000	515,245	683,000	654,000	569,165
South.....	814,000	682,000	688,380	993,000	1,083,000	574,110
West.....	752,000	671,000	470,095	535,000	399,000	395,150

FARM-NONFARM SHIFTS

Persons who move from a farm to a nonfarm residence or from a nonfarm to a farm residence tend to travel longer distances than those movers who do not change their type of residence. In April 1955, for example, 1 out of every 4 persons who went from one farm to another was living in a different county and 1 out of every 20 was living in a different State from a year ago (table 8). Of those moving from a farm to a nonfarm residence, 2 out of every 5 went to a different county and 1 out of every 6 to a different State.

Estimates of movement to and from farms are also published by the Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture. These estimates are based primarily on data submitted by crop reporters. Unlike the estimates from

the Current Population Survey, those of the Agricultural Marketing Service include shifts resulting from changes in the classification of residences from farm to nonfarm and vice versa. Although the estimates have been in agreement on the direction of the net movement in recent years, there have been appreciable differences in the magnitude of both gross movements and net change. In view of the high sampling errors and difficulties of classification of households as farm or nonfarm by enumerators and respondents, Current Population Survey estimates of the absolute amount of farm-nonfarm movements are not being published in this report. The percent distributions shown in table 8 are considered valuable in themselves for the information presented on the mobility status and type of mobility of persons changing their type of residence. Differences in the two series are being investigated further.

RELATED REPORTS

Statistics on the mobility status of the population 1 year old and over for recent years appear in the following reports in Series P-20:

- No. 57, "Mobility of the Population of the United States: April 1953 to April 1954."
- No. 49, "Mobility of the Population of the United States: April 1952 to April 1953."
- No. 47, "Mobility of the Population of the United States: April 1952."
- No. 39, "Mobility of the Population of the United States: April 1950 to April 1951."
- No. 36, "Internal Migration and Mobility in the United States: March 1949 to March 1950."

1950 Census.--Statistics on the mobility of the population for cities, counties, standard metropolitan areas, urbanized areas, States, divisions, regions, and the United States appear in Volume II of the 1950 Census of Population. Detailed statistics on mobility status by color and sex for States, divisions, regions, and the United States appear in 1950 Census of Population, Advance Reports, Series PC-14, No. 17. The special reports of the 1950 Census entitled "Characteristics by Size of Place," "Education," and "Institutional Population" present statistics on mobility status in relation to the main subject of the report.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Population coverage.--The data for 1955 (covering the period April 1954 to April 1955) shown in this report relate primarily to the civilian population of the United States 1 year old and over. Approximately 800,000 members of the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post were also included, but all other members of the Armed Forces were excluded. For simplicity, the group covered is called the "population" or the "civilian population" in this report. The coverage of the population for the earlier survey years was essentially the same. The data from the 1950 Census relate to the total population 1 year old and over.

Urban and rural residence.--The definition of urban and rural areas which was used in the April 1955 survey was the same as that used in the 1950 Census, but it differed

substantially from that used in surveys and censuses before 1950. The territory classified as urban is the same as that in the 1950 Census.

Size of place.--The urban population is classified as living in urbanized areas or in urban places outside urbanized areas. According to the definition used in the 1950 Census and in the April 1954 Current Population Survey, the population in urbanized areas comprises all persons living in (a) cities of 50,000 inhabitants or more in 1940 or according to a special census taken between 1940 and 1950; and (b) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, surrounding these cities. Residents of urbanized areas were classified according to the size of the entire area rather than by the size of the place in which they lived. The remaining urban population is classified as living in the smaller urban places not in the urbanized areas.

Farm and nonfarm residence.--The rural population is subdivided into the rural-farm population, which comprises all rural residents living on farms, and the rural-nonfarm population, which comprises the remaining rural population. The method of determining farm and nonfarm residence in the April 1955 survey is the same as that used in the 1950 Census and in the April 1951 through 1954 and March 1950 Current Population Surveys but differs from that used in earlier surveys and censuses. Persons on "farms" who were paying cash rent for their house and yard only were classified as nonfarm; furthermore, persons in institutions, summer camps, "motels," and tourist camps were classified as nonfarm.

Standard metropolitan area.--Except in New England, a standard metropolitan area is a county or group of contiguous counties which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more. In addition to the county, or counties, containing such a city, or cities, contiguous counties are included in a standard metropolitan area if according to certain criteria they are essentially metropolitan in character and socially and economically integrated with the central city. In New England, standard metropolitan areas have been defined on a town rather than county basis.

Mobility status.--The civilian population of the United States has been classified

according to mobility status on the date of the survey on the basis of a comparison between the place of residence of each individual at the survey date and the place of residence one year earlier. This comparison restricts the classification in terms of mobility status to the population to persons 1 year old and over at the survey date.

The information on mobility status was obtained from the response to the following series of inquiries. The first of these was: "Was ... living in this house April 1 a year ago?" If the answer was "No," the enumerator asked, "Was ... living in this same county on April 1 a year ago?" If the response was "No" again, the enumerator asked, "What State (or foreign country) was ... living in on April 1 a year ago?"

In the classification three main categories are distinguished:

1. Mobile persons or movers.--This group consists of all persons who were living in a different house in the United States at the end of the period than at the beginning of the period.

2. Nonmobile persons or nonmovers.--This group consists of persons who were living in the same house at the end of the period as at the beginning of the period.

3. Persons abroad.--This group consists of persons, either citizens or aliens, whose place of residence was outside continental United States at the beginning of the period, that is, in a Territory or possession of the United States or a foreign country. These persons are distinguished from movers, who are persons who moved from one place to another within continental United States.

Mobile persons are subdivided in terms of type of mobility into the following two groups:

1. Same-county (intracounty) movers.--These are persons living in a different house but in the same county at the beginning and end of the specified period.

2. Migrants, or different-county (intercounty) movers.--This group consists of persons living in a different county in the United States at the beginning and end of the period. Migrants are further classified by type of migration on the basis of a comparison

of the State of residence at the end of the period with the State of residence at the beginning of the period:

- a. Migrants within a State.
- b. Migrants between States.

Age.--The age classification is based on the age of the person at his last birthday.

Color.--The term "color" refers to the division of population into two groups, white and nonwhite. The group designated as "non-white" consists of Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races.

Employment status

Employed persons.--This category comprises those persons who, during the survey week, were either (a) "at work"--those who did any work for pay or profit, or worked without pay for 15 hours or more on a family farm or business; or (b) "with a job but not at work"--those who did not work and were not looking for work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, bad weather, or layoff with definite instructions to return to work within 30 days of layoff. Also included are persons who had new jobs to which they were scheduled to report within 30 days.

Unemployed persons.--This category includes those persons who did not work at all during the survey week, and who were looking for work. Also included as unemployed are persons who would have been looking for work except that (a) they were temporarily ill, (b) they expected to return to a job from which they had been laid off for an indefinite period, or (c) they believed no work was available in their line of work or in the community.

Labor force.--This category comprises (a) the total of all civilians classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the criteria described above, and (b) persons serving in the Armed Forces who, at the time of the survey, were living off post or with their families on post. Members of the Armed Forces living on post, apart from their families, are not included.

Not in the labor force.--This category includes those persons 14 years old and over not classified as employed, unemployed, or in

the Armed Forces. Persons who were engaged in "own home" housework, in school, inmates of institutions, retired, permanently unable or too old to work, seasonal workers for whom the survey fell in an "off" season, and the voluntarily idle are considered as "not in the labor force." Persons doing only incidental unpaid work (less than 15 hours) are also classified as not being in the labor force.

Major industry group and class of worker.--

The data on industry and class of worker relate to the job held during the survey week. Persons employed at two or more jobs were reported in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours during the week.

The industrial categories shown are largely major groups in the classification used in the 1950 Census of Population. The composition of the major groups in terms of detailed industries is shown in Volume II of the reports of the 1950 Census of Population.

The classification by class of worker consists of four categories which are defined as follows:

1. Private wage and salary workers.--

Persons who work for a private employer for wages, salary, commission, tips, pay-in-kind, or at piece rates.

2. Government workers.--Persons who

work for any government unit (Federal, State, or local), regardless of the activity carried on.

3. Self-employed workers.--Persons who

work in their own business, profession, or trade, or operate a farm, for profit or fees.

4. Unpaid family workers.--Persons who

work without pay on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the household to whom they are related by blood or marriage.

SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF
THE ESTIMATES

The estimates presented in this report are based on data obtained in connection with the monthly population sample survey of the Bureau of the Census. The statistics for April 1954 and April 1955 are based on a new sample design instituted in January 1954. This sample is spread over 230 sample areas comprising 453 counties and independent cities.

A total of 24,000 to 26,000 dwelling units and other living quarters are designated for the sample at any time, and completed interviews are obtained each month from about 20,000 to 22,000 households. Of the remainder, about 500 to 1,000 are households for which information should be obtained but is not, and the rest are vacant households or those otherwise not to be enumerated for the survey. The data for all previous periods for which similar information was obtained were based on a different sample, which consisted of about the same number of units but which covered only 68 sample areas in 42 States and the District of Columbia.

The estimating procedure used in this survey involved the inflation of weighted sample results to independent estimates of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States by age, color, and sex. For the April 1955, 1954, and 1953 figures shown in this report, the independent estimates used were based on statistics from the 1950 Census of Population; statistics of births, deaths, immigration, and emigration; and statistics on the strength of the Armed Forces and separation records. For April 1952 and earlier years, the independent estimates were based on data of the 1940 Census of Population similarly adjusted to take account of the aging of the population, births, deaths, net immigration, and changes in the size of the Armed Forces.

Since the estimates are based on a sample they are subject to sampling variability. The following illustration, based upon rough computations from the new survey, indicates the order of magnitude of the sampling errors for some typical statistics in April 1955. An estimated 3,075,000 persons in rural-farm areas lived in different houses in April 1955 and in April 1954. This number is 14.5 percent of the total number of persons living in rural-farm areas in April 1955. The relative sampling error is about 7 percent of the estimate of 3,075,000. The sampling error of the estimate of 14.5 percent is roughly 1 percentage point. The chances are about 67 out of 100 that the estimates from the sample differ from the results which would be obtained from a complete census by the sampling errors indicated for the above items. The chances are about 95 out of 100 that the differences would be less than twice the specified sampling errors and about 99 out of 100 that they would be less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the errors indicated.

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